

# Nose Prints



BUILT AROUND KINDNESS, EMPATHY, AND RESPECT  
For the Best of Friends – From Baker Animal Clinic

Spring 2009

## Dental Health

### **Pets Have Teeth Too!**

*Imagine how your teeth would look and feel if you didn't brush them daily. The same applies to your pet's teeth. Unless you are regularly providing some form of dental care, you are neglecting an important factor in the overall health of your pet.*

Looking after your pet's teeth at home is the key to the dental health of your pet. The time and effort you put into caring for your pet's teeth at home will pay off in the future. Dental homecare helps keep your pet's mouth healthy and comfortable, decreases the risk of dental disease, decreases the likelihood of significant dental bills in the future, and can even increase the bond between you and your pet.

### **There are four types of teeth:**

**Incisors:** Front teeth, used for grooming and gnawing.

**Canines:** The large teeth located on either side of the incisors.

**Premolars:** Located between the canines and the molars. Used to chew food.

**Molars:** Located at the back of the mouth. Used to grind food.

### **Dental Disease**

There are 4 stages in the progression of dental disease:

- 1) **Plaque** – is a soft mixture made up of food residue, saliva and bacteria that sticks to the surface of teeth.
- 2) **Calculus** – is hardened solidified plaque.
- 3) **Gingivitis** – is the swelling and reddening of the gingiva (gums) and it marks the beginning of periodontal disease.
- 4) **Periodontal disease** – is the inflammation, infection and

destruction of the periodontium (the tissues that support the teeth).

### **Signs and Symptoms**

You should book an appointment with your veterinarian if your pet exhibits any of the following signs that might indicate a dental problem:

#### **Face & Neck**

- Skin lesions
- Swelling

#### **General**

- Loss of appetite
- Weight loss
- Unkempt coat

#### **Mouth**

- Reddened and/or swollen gingiva
- Discoloured, loose or fractured teeth
- Bad breath
- Growths or lesions in the mouth
- Inability to open mouth fully or close mouth
- Excessive drooling (salivation)
- Bloody saliva

#### **Behaviour**

- Attitude change (pet becomes withdrawn or aggressive)
- Doesn't allow its mouth or head to be touched.
- Paws at or rubs its face
- Cries when chewing
- Shows reluctance to chew
- Swallows food without chewing
- Drops food when chewing

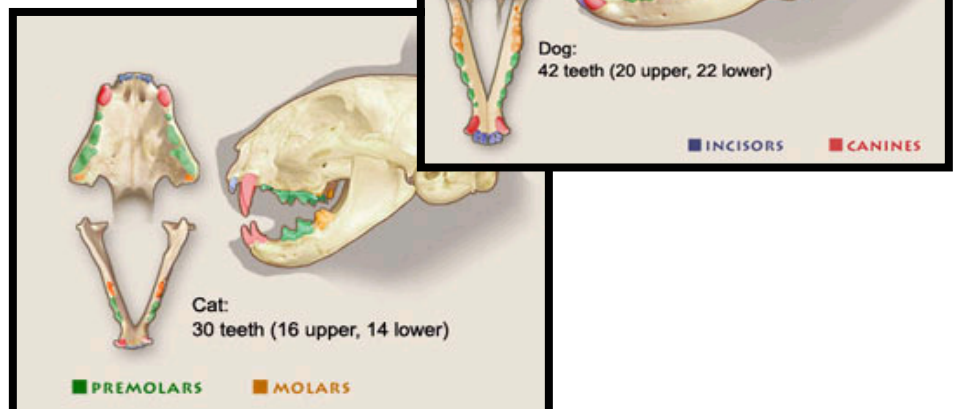
### **Dental Home Care**

**You can improve your pet's dental health by considering the following:**

**Diet:** Dry food (if chewed well) and crunchy vegetables can help scrape plaque off the teeth. There are also special dental care diets available.

**Chew Toys & Aids:** Rubber chew toys are the safest choice since they will not cut the pet's gums or break teeth. Use caution in selecting a chew toy that cannot be swallowed and will not become wedged between the pet's teeth.

**Brushing:** Brushing is the best way to remove plaque from your pet's teeth. Daily brushing is most beneficial and will help to establish a routine for your pet, but brushing two to three times a week is acceptable if your schedule can't accommodate daily brushing.



## IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR AGAIN...

With the warmer weather quickly approaching – and the mosquitos – it is time to make sure our canine friends are adequately protected against the risk of heartworm.

Heartworm disease or dirofilariasis is a serious and potentially fatal disease in dogs. It is caused by a blood-borne parasite called *Dirofilaria immitis*. Heartworms are found in the heart and adjacent large blood vessels of infected dogs. The adult female worm is 6-14 inches long and about 5mm in diameter with the males being slightly smaller. One dog may have as many as 300 worms, each of which can live for up to 5 years. During this time, the females produce millions of offspring called microfilaria. These microfilariae live mainly in the small vessels of the bloodstream and cannot complete their life cycle in the dog without an intermediate host.

The intermediate host in the heartworm life cycle is the mosquito. The female mosquito bites the infected dog and ingests the microfilariae with the blood meal, which then take between 10 to 30 days to develop further before entering the mouthparts of the mosquito. The microfilariae are then infective larvae and when the mosquito bites another dog they can then continue their life cycle by maturing in the heart and adjacent vessels and begin reproducing after two to three months.

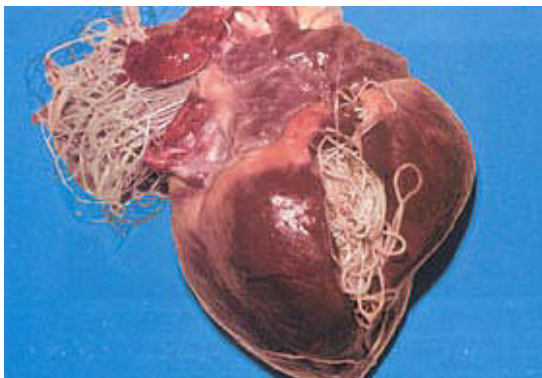
Adult heartworms cause disease by clogging the heart and major blood vessels leading from the heart. They interfere in the valve action in the heart and cause reduced blood supply to other organs of the body such as the lungs, liver and kidneys, leading to a malfunction of these organs.

Microfilariae circulate throughout the body but remain primarily in small blood vessels and can block the blood flow in these vessels, primarily affecting the lungs and liver. Destruction of lung tissue leads to coughing. Cirrhosis of the liver causes jaundice, anemia, and general weakness. If the kidneys are affected they will not be as effective at removing toxins, causing them to build up in the body.

The most common test to diagnose the presence of heartworm is a blood test for antigens (proteins) produced by the adult heartworms. It will be positive even if the dog does not have microfilaria in the blood. This is important because approximately 20% of dogs acquire an immunity to that stage of the heartworm. Dogs with less than five adult heartworms will not have enough antigen to give a positive test result, so there may be occasional false negative results in dogs with early infections. Because the detected antigen is only produced by the female heartworm, a population of only male heartworms will also give a false negative.

There is some risk involved in treating dogs with heartworms, although fatalities are rare. A newer drug is now available that does not have the toxic side effects of the past treatments that contained arsenic, allowing successful treatment of more than 95% of dogs with heartworms. Some dogs are diagnosed with advanced heartworm disease, which means that the heartworms have been present long enough to cause substantial damage to the heart, lungs, blood vessels, kidneys and liver. A few of these cases will be so advanced that it will be safer to treat the organ damage rather than risk treatment to kill the heartworms. Dogs in this condition do not have a very long life expectancy.

Heartworm can be preventable by keeping your dog on one of many available heartworm prevention programs. Annual heartworm tests are important for early detection in case of missed or late prevention doses. With the safe and affordable preventatives available today, along with annual heartworm tests no pet should ever have to endure this disease.



## Gone to the Dogs Obedience Training

### Want a better behaved dog?

Our goal is to find a training program and method that best suits both you and your dog.

We see every dog and their human companions as individuals and treat them as such.

We are here to help you achieve the relationship with your dog you have always wanted by helping you better understand your K9 companion.



### Classes Available

We offer classes ranging from puppy socialization to basic obedience.

Puppy Socialization  
(12 weeks – 6 months)

Basic Obedience  
(6 months & up)

Individual Training  
(one on one with your dog in your home)

For more information on each individual class and starting dates for upcoming classes please call the clinic at (905) 571-3700.

## RC PET PRODUCTS

We are pleased to introduce the availability of these Canadian made pet products. These products are of exceptional quality and workmanship. Fully and unconditionally guaranteed these items reflect the fact that our pets spend more time with us and deserve gear that is designed to last.

Because of the wide range of items available we cannot stock all items but we will be happy to order any items for you. They are shipped from beautiful British Columbia and can be available within 7 - 10 days.

*"So grab some gear and your pet and get out there and enjoy"*



## Feline Urinary Tract Disease

Urinary problems in cats can be caused by a variety of disorders including bladder stones (uroliths), bacterial infections, urethral obstructions as well as a condition called feline idiopathic cystitis (FIC). FIC literally means an inflammation of the urinary bladder of unknown origin and is estimated to affect up to 1% of the cat population.

It is believed that accumulated inflammatory debris and mineral crystals may form a plug that obstructs the urethra of male cats however females rarely obstruct as their urethra is comparatively shorter and wider. Complete urinary obstruction can develop into a life-threatening emergency within 48 hours. Uroliths, bacterial infections and FIC can affect both male and female cats.

Common signs of urinary tract disease include increased frequency of urination, straining to urinate, blood in urine, inappropriate urination, increased grooming of genital region as well as distressed meowing while urinating. If any of these symptoms are accompanied by lethargy, loss of appetite, vomiting or reluctance to move this could constitute a medical emergency and you should contact your veterinarian immediately.

The first step your veterinarian will take is to determine the underlying cause of the symptoms. This often requires a series of tests to either confirm or rule out particular disorders, usually starting with a full physical exam and palpation of bladder. Other tests may include:

**Urinalysis** – This test can indicate inflammation or infection in the urinary tract. Results can also give an idea of hydration and kidney function.

**Culture & Sensitivity** – A test that determines the presence and type of bacteria in urine and also determines the antibiotics most likely to be effective in killing the bacteria.

**Radiographs** – Abdominal xrays identify stones that are dense enough to be visualized. Contrast dye xray studies can help visualize smaller, less dense stones.

Sometimes cats will battle with urinary tract disease their whole lives but once you have had underlying causes treated by your veterinarian there are some things you can do to help at home.

- Treatment often involves a change in diet from a dry food to a canned food. This increases water intake and helps increase the health of the urinary tract.
- Minimize stress in the home. This involves making sure your cat can have an escape from things they don't like (ie. Other pets), and providing multiple feeding and watering areas to reduce competition between pets.
- Make sure your cats' environment is stimulating. Ensure you have plenty of scratching posts, beds, interesting windows to look out and toys.
- Stimulate your cat by playing for at least 10 minutes at least once a day
- Clean up urine messes on the carpet or furniture well. There are many good products on the market that use enzymes to break down the odour.
- Studies have shown that cats tend to prefer unscented, clumping litter. They should be kept clean at all times.
- The general rule is to have a litter box for each cat plus one extra.

## 12 Reasons Why Your Pet Should be on Year Round Parasite Prevention

- 17% of children in a Halifax study were seropositive for roundworm
- Roundworm and whipworm eggs have been shown to overwinter at much lower temperatures than were originally thought possible, creating a persistent environmental hazard in your yard and potential for parasite infection in you and your pet.
- 2 fleas, 2 days, 200 eggs, 2 months, 2000 fleas
- There are approximately 300 cases of heartworm disease diagnosed in Ontario every year. Heartworm is fatal to dogs and is 100% preventable.
- Treating dogs that are positive for heartworm requires sedation and painful injections.
- A dog infected with intestinal roundworms will often defecate more than 20,000 eggs/day, and although we work to clean up our yards, eggs remain behind.
- Raccoon roundworms can be easily transmitted to dogs and can be extremely dangerous to people as the larvae of these worms tend to travel to the central nervous system and cause severe brain damage and in some cases death.
- Fleas are a nuisance parasite that can infest your home. Eggs, larvae and pupae live in the environment and bury themselves into dark quiet spaces including the base of your carpet, tile cracks and crevices, baseboard edges and places where your pet lies (including furniture).
- Flea eggs and larvae are microscopic, and appear only as 'salt and pepper' grains to the naked eye... so you may not see them until they are really a problem.
- Mosquitos that go dormant in the winter months carrying heartworm, wake up in warmer, more humid conditions carrying heartworm and creating an uninterrupted lifecycle.
- The Companion Animal Parasite Council and the American Heartworm Society advocate for year round parasite prevention. These expert groups advise that 12 months of prevention has been proven to best protect your pets and your family from the risk of the most common parasites.
- 12 months of broad spectrum parasite prevention is a key component of a lifelong wellness approach to veterinary care, just as important as annual exams and appropriate vaccinations.



## H. O. P. E.

### *Helping Our Pets Everyday*

Unwanted cats can find new homes!!  
To date we have successfully adopted over one  
hundred cats into new homes!!

*Established in October of 2002*

Baker Animal Clinic has started a program where  
cats can have  
another chance to find a new home.  
Baker Animal Clinic would like to thank everyone  
that has donated to our adoption program and Iams  
and Purina for their support.

*Thank You Everyone for Your Support!!*

Our H.O.P.E. Adoption Program continues to do  
very well. Donations of blankets, food, litter  
and/or monetary donations are greatly appreciated  
and allow us to find these cats new homes so they  
can receive the care they so richly deserve.

### **Top Records of Dogs...and Fun Facts**

Records were made to be broken, but some will prove awfully hard  
to bust.

Here are some all-time, never broken records set by dogs and cats.  
These records have stood the test of time – and heaven help us if they  
are ever broken.

- The tallest dog ever recorded stood at a towering 42 inches at the  
shoulder. Standing on hind legs, the dog reached 6 foot 9 inches.  
From nose to tail, he was just less than 8 feet. The dog was a  
Great Dane from Great Britain, who lived from 1975 to 1984.
- The world's oldest dog lived to the ripe old age of 29 years and 5  
months. Born in 1910, Bluey, an Australian Cattle Dog, faithfully  
herded cattle for more than 20 years before retiring. He died in  
1939.
- The most prolific mother award goes to Lena, an American  
Foxhound who gave birth to 23 puppies in June 1944, in Ambler,  
Pa. The little miracles, black and white spotted puppies, all lived  
and reached maturity.

#### Other Interesting Pet Facts

- The bloodhound is the only animal whose evidence is admissible  
in a U.S. court of law.
- Two dogs survived the Titanic disaster – a Pomeranian and a  
Pekingese.
- Each year, Americans spend more money on dog food than baby  
food.
- The phrase “dog days of summer” was originally a reference to the  
constellations. It refers to the period between July and September,  
when the “dog star” Sirius rises early with the sun.

## Frog Maze



### Office Information

**Baker Animal Clinic**  
1627 Dundas Street East  
Whitby, Ont. L1N 2K9  
(905) 571-3700

David Sutherland, DVM  
Jessica Sherwin, DVM  
Cheryl Birss, DVM  
Erika Sullivan, DVM

#### **Email:**

[bakeranimalclinic@rogers.com](mailto:bakeranimalclinic@rogers.com)

#### **Website:**

[www.bakeranimalclinic.com](http://www.bakeranimalclinic.com)

#### Hours

Mon. - Fri. 8:00am – 7:00pm  
Sat. 9:00am – 1:00pm

### ***By Appointment Only***

For Your Convenience We  
Accept Payment By  
Visa, MasterCard, Interac, and  
Cash